



Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, *Chair*
Delegate Jessica Feldmark, *Vice-Chair*
House Ways & Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill 720: Education - Artificial Intelligence - Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act) - SUPPORT

March 30, 2026

Dear Chairman Feldman and Committee Members:

As President & Chief Executive Officer of the National Cryptologic Foundation (NCF), I write this letter in support of *Senate Bill 720, entitled; Education - Artificial Intelligence – Guidelines, Professional Development, and Collaborative (Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act)*.

Artificial intelligence dates back to the 1960s, when the first AI chatbot, ELIZA, was created by Joseph Weizenbaum. However, since the introduction of ChatGPT in late 2022, AI has taken the world by storm. AI has given the world access to a powerful tool, and *this* technology will continue to evolve in the years to come.

As new AI tools are released, companies, state governments, and education institutions must be educated on how to properly use them and stay aware of the positive aspects and negative concerns as they are discovered. Understanding the benefits and risks involved with AI in Maryland’s K-12 school systems will require guidance and education that promotes safety and ethical standards and best practices for our students, teachers, and administrators.

The enactment of the Artificial Intelligence Ready Schools Act in Maryland would have several significant impacts on the state. SB720 would also require the State Department of Education to provide guidance on AI, emphasizing safe, responsible, equitable, and ethical use. This will help ensure that AI is integrated into educational systems in a manner that supports student learning and safety.

This legislation mandates that each county board designate a coordinator for AI use and that professional development for teachers on AI be provided by July 1, 2027. This will enhance the skills and knowledge of educators to effectively use AI in their classrooms. Promoting teacher training in AI is no longer an option but instead a necessary mandated reality.

A few years ago, NCF and our partner *Teach Cyber* provided resources and training programs to help Maryland teachers receive professional development in cybersecurity. Similar to those efforts, the time is now for Maryland to equip our teachers and administrators with confidence and proficiency with this evolving technology for the betterment of student learning and safety in the classrooms.

Finally, this legislation establishes the Maryland AI Education Collaborative, composed of educators, administrators, parents, and students. The Collaborative will study the uses of AI in local school systems and make recommendations for guidance and policy adoption. These impacts aim to ensure that AI is used in education in a way that benefits students and educators alike, fostering a culture of AI literacy and responsible use in the classroom.

It is for these reasons I am in full support of SB720. This legislation was introduced last year; I strongly urge this committee to give this legislation a **FAVORABLE** report and to enact this important piece of legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laura Nelson
President & Chief Executive Officer
National Cryptologic Foundation